

To whom it may concern:

We are writing on behalf of the SAPTA (Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Agency) Advisory Board. We advise the Division of Public and Behavioral Health concerning services for treatment and prevention of substance use under authority of Administrator Whitley.

In the many years the Advisory Board has met, a continuing struggle has been workforce challenges in the behavioral health workforce space. We understand that workforce development is not inherently in the purview of the regulatory boards, and we also know that work around licensure, policy, and regulation are multifaceted.

While we understand this issue is difficult to address, Nevada continues to rank 51st in the nation for Mental Health, according to Mental Health America. This can not be a problem we collectively continue to neglect. We all should require action in the areas we have oversight or influence on. The areas of concern generally fall into one of five categories, listed below:

- A better workforce pipeline from high school and higher education, through job placement
- Increased availability of Internships and practicums
- Supervision tailored toward workforce development
- More efficiency and smoother transitions in certifications
- Increased exposure to the field of behavioral health to increase interest in the field across the lifespan

We hope that you lean on the expertise of the stakeholders assembled at the SAPTA Advisory Board to help systemically address the gaps and shortages in our behavioral health workforce to create a safer and healthier Nevada.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jolene Dalluhn and Jamie Ross
Co-Chairs of the SAPTA Advisory Board